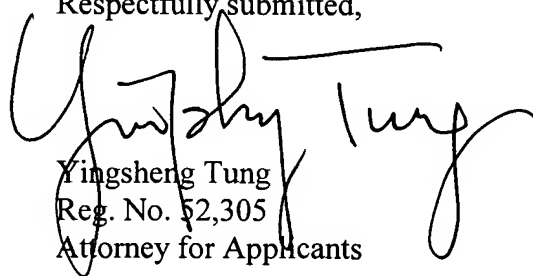


**Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance:**

Applicants thank Examiner Blum for his careful examination of this application and for allowing claims 18-32. In the Statement of Reasons for Allowance, Examiner Blum noted that "Bannerjee (US0067071321) forms a SiGe layer at the top surface of the silicon substrate (the instant application uses germanium to alter the oxidation characteristics of the silicon layer), but the silicon germanium layer at the surface is formed in trenches rather than forming trenches through the silicon germanium layer as in the instant claims." Examiner Blum is correct that SiGe and silicon do have different oxidation rates, but claim 18 is not limited to semiconductor wafer having a SiGe top surface. Claim 8 requires a semiconductor wafer that has a top surface that has an oxidization rate slower than that of other major crystallographic planes of the semiconductor material.

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Respectfully submitted,



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